1: Rosen E-5 (1901-1902) 1924 SK6 Choroti SK6

292 cluster being merely a head ornament, but the Chaco Indians often give
302 information that is purposely incorrect, and hence one cannot always rely
[124] upon their explanations.[1] A quaint head ornament, met with among the Choroti, consists of a cross, about 1 dm high, constructed of feathers, thread, and a wooden stick. These crosses, worn stuck into the frontlet, are very similar to a kind of ornaments, probably symbolic or magic, that are occasionally found together with ancient Peruvian mummies.[2]

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Fig. 48. Ornament of white feathers, meant for fixing in a frontlet. Choroti. Gran Chaco. Bolivia. 1/2. Riksm. 03. 3. 26.

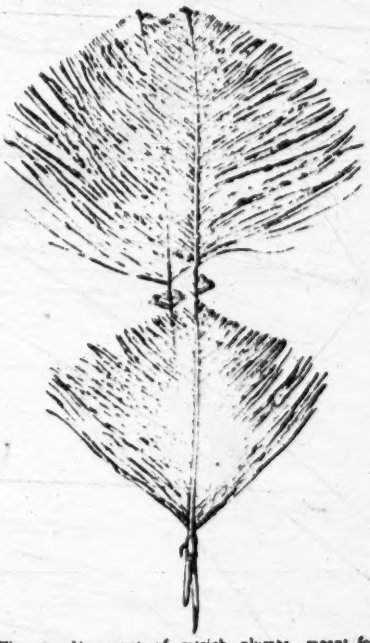

Fig. 49. Ornament of ostrich plumes, meant for fixing in a frontlet. Choroti. Gran Chaco. Bolivia. 1/2. Riksm. 03. 3. 20.

302 Occasionally the Choroti, and also other Chaco Indians, gather a lock
727 of their front hair into a tuft, tying it round with yarn or narrow woollen tape, so as to make it look like a brush, or broom. Sometimes they make a similar little brush from false hair, and wear it pushed in under the frontlet, over the forehead, so that it points downwards. The false-hair brush here depicted (fig. 52) possessed special value to the Choroti

[1] As to the lying disposition of the Indians of the Chaco, see for example Nordenskiöld (13), p. 34.
[2] Nordenskiöld (11), pp. 138—140.

1: Rosen E-5 (1901-1902) 1924 SK6 Choroti SK6

who was wearing it, for, according to his statement, this ornament originally belonged to an enemy killed by him (Cf. the »scalp lock» on the Indian in fig. 42). 302 727

On the Spaniards' first coming to the Inca kingdom, there was, naturally, in that country much that aroused their great astonishment. Among 101

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Fig. 50. Bamboo casing for keeping ostrich feather head ornaments. Choroti. Gran Chaco. Bolivia. 1/6. Rikam. 10. 3. 18.

Fig. 51. Palm leaf object, said to be meant for wearing in a frontlet. Choroti. Gran Chaco. Bolivia. 1/6. Rikam. 03. 3. 29.

other things, the strangers found it especially remarkable that Peruvian men of noble birth were wearing immense, often metal-mounted wooden discs, or hanging ornaments, in their pierced ear-lobes, which were distended to a monstrous size. This custom occasioned the Spaniards to give the Peruvian nobles the nickname of »orejones» — which might be

1: Rosen E-5 (1901-1902) 1924 SK6 Choroti SK6

This Indian practice of setting fire to their enemies' dwellings by shooting arrows has been mentioned as early as the 16th century. Thus Schmidel, for instance, relates how the Indians in the year 1535 set the very town of Buenos Ayres on fire, by their bow-shots, so that the town was burnt to the ground.[1] 726

For choice, the Indians always try to attack their enemies by surprise. When the Indians on the Pilcomayo (Toba, and probably also Choroti) wished to annihilate Crevaux's expedition, by their at first very peacable and confidence-inspiring demeanour, they succeeded in so completely duping the members of the expedition that the latter did not take the trouble of always going about armed. Then the Indians concluded that the time was ripe for action, and at a preconcerted sign they fell upon the expedition, only one of whose unsuspecting members managed to escape. According to what an old Mataco chief told me, the explorer, Ibarreta, was also treacherously killed by the Indians. Ibarreta was said to have fallen ill whilst staying among Tapiete Indians in the Pilcomayo swamps in the interior of the Chaco, and to have been killed by those Indians in his sleep.

When the Indians of the Chaco are about to embark upon some warlike enterprise, they first get up a festival of drinking and dancing, at which large quantities of algaroba beer are consumed.[2] They paint their bodies [302] black and red, and adorn themselves with plumes and other ornaments; this is, at least partly, done as a preparation for going to fight not only earthly enemies, but also supernatural powers.[3]

The Choroti take their fallen enemies' scalps, and subsequently, on 727 special occasions, hang up the scalps in their villages;[4] they also highly prize the scalp-locks, resembling brooms or shaving-brushes (see figs. 42 and 52), that they obtain from slain foes.

The Chaco Indians sometimes torture their war prisoners. According to what the Bolivian soldiers at Fort Crevaux told me, the way they used to torture their prisoners was as follows. The prisoner was laid flat on his back on the ground, and his hands and feet tied to pegged-down stakes. Dry sticks were placed in a heap on the stomach of the victim,

[1] Schmidel von Straubing (1), p. 23.
[2] Nordenskiöld (13), p. 133.
[3] Karsten (2), p. 36.
[4] Nordenskiöld (13), p. 121 and 133.

1: Rosen E-5 (1901-1902) 1924 SK6 Choroti SK6

727 and this miniature pyre was set alight. The flames only rising upwards, the fire and the glowing cinders would only very slowly burn through the skin and into the stomach. It is difficult to imagine a more cruel method of torture.

721 Many of the wars waged between so-called civilized nations have owed their origin to greed of the wealth that nature produces, and among the Indians, wars may be due to the same cause. In the case of primitive

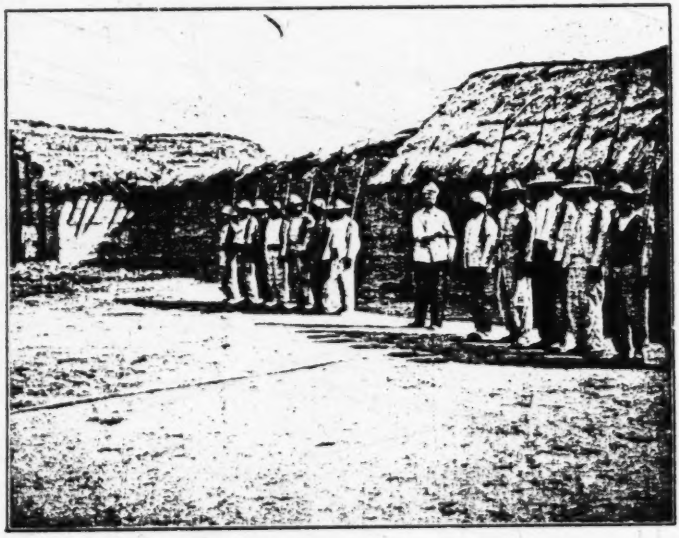

Fig. 112. Fort Crevaux. Gran Chaco. Bolivia. Photo. E. v. R.

peoples, wars are perhaps mostly a competitive struggle for food, and we may take it for granted that the fights that have taken place between the tribes on the Pilcomayo have been over the fishing in that river, so very important a matter to the Indians. It is partly for this reason, and partly because war is a hunting of human beings, that I have dealt with the war methods, and the war weapons, of the Choroti in this chapter on their means of subsistence.

226 Owing to the circumstance that the part of the Choroti tribe among which I was carrying on my studies, at the time of my stay with them,

1: Rosen E-5 (1901-1902) 1924 SK6 Choroti SK6

that the hair in certain magic rites could represent the person from whom it had been taken.[1] We find a similar belief existent among the Choroti who, because of it, carefully burn the hairs that they cut off or pluck out. They also believe that the souls of the dead, as well as evil spirits, are capable of working harm on the living by means of the hair, and on this belief is based the custom of the Choroti women of cutting off this adornment on the death of their husbands.[2] Similarly, the practice universally prevalent among the Choroti of plucking out eyebrows, eyelashes and other hairs of the face, the hairs of the armpits and about the genital parts, is probably due to this belief.[3] When a Choroti Indian takes a scalp, or fixes the scalp lock of a slain foe under his frontlet (see pp. 60, 61 and 103), it is probable that he considers that he has not only succeeded in obtaining a material trophy, but that the possession of the scalp or scalp lock to some certain extent confers upon him power over the spirit of his fallen adversary.[4]

Fig. 185. Bone awl for blood-letting. Probably made out of an ulna of a puma. The awl is wrapped round with a red woollen fillet to prevent it from penetrating too deeply into the muscles. Choroti. Gran Chaco. Bolivia. 2/3. Riksm. 03. 3. 82.

Fig. 186. Bone awl for blood-letting; also used for tattooing. Probably made from an ulna of a raptorial bird. The awl is wrapped round with grey and red woollen yarn (the latter nethermost) so as not to enter too deeply into the flesh. Choroti. Gran Chaco. Bolivia. 2/3. Riksm. 03. 3. 83.

In the foregoing (pp. 63 and 75) I have mentioned that the Choroti on certain occasions perform a kind of magic blood-letting by means of bone awls. I have also given an account of the Indian conception of the effects of this kind of blood-letting (see pp. 63 and 64). I will now add that I think it probable that the *material* of which the awl consists also plays a certain part.

Nordenskiöld has observed that the Ashluslay, when they are out looking for nests of wild bees, prick themselves above the eyes with a

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[1] Even as early as in the Wœrend law, mention is made of hair being used in witchcraft.

[2] See page 182.

[3] Karsten (4), p. 10.

[4] Cf. Karsten (4), p. 60.

2: Nordenskiöld E-5 (1908-1909)1919
SK6 Choroti SK6
Ashluslay SK5

XXIII.

Trophies.

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In the year 1909, in the Chaco, I succeeded in acquiring a scalp from the Mataco Indians (the scalp of an Ashluslay Indian) and one also from the Ashluslay Indians (the scalp of a Toba-Pilaga). I also learned that the Choroti take scalps. FRIEDERICI has written a comprehensive and excellent work on scalping and similar customs in America, which is based on extensive literary studies.

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He there shows that scalping has two areas of occurrence in S. America[1]). The one comprises El Gran Chaco, and the other Guiana. Respecting the former he quotes numerous statements from literature on the subject. Among the writers quoted is SCHMIDEL. FRIEDERICI holds that the custom of scalping, in Guiana, is post-Columbian. ROTH[2]) is of the same opinion.

The keeping of whole human heads as trophies is, according to FRIEDERICI, a very widespread custom in S. America. According to his map this custom prevailed in the whole of S. America except in El Gran Chaco, Patagonia, and Tierra del Fuego. The correctness of this statement is not, however, apparent from the text of his work. From this work I formerly got the impression that headhunting occurred among the highly developed tribes of western S. America, including the Incas, in Eastern Ecuador,

[1]) (1) p. 40.
[2]) (2) p. 4.

2: Karsten E-5 (1911-1913)1932 SI7 Mataco SI7
Toba SI 12
Choroti SK 7

In disposition the three tribes show great differences. The *Choroti* are pleasant and cheerful, and display to a high degree that humorous spirit which is often characteristic of the Indian even when he looks serious. They are lazy and carefree and love amusement, feasting, dancing, and games above everything. When the Choroti Indian has plenty of food and algaroba beer for the moment, he makes merry and eats and drinks as much as he can, but has no thought for the morrow and does not store provisions like the more advanced Chaco tribes. This particularly holds true of the men; the women, who in general are more industrious, show more forethought in this respect, collecting wild fruits in great quantities when they are in season, and keeping the seed-corn till the following sowing. But on the whole poverty is an outstanding feature of the material culture of the Choroti, and this is no doubt due to a great extent to their own character.

The Choroti are — at least nowadays — a peaceful people, and in the insignificant wars they have sometimes waged with the Mataco on the other side of the river, they have manifested very little organization or discipline. As I was told by settlers on the Pilcomayo, the Choroti were formerly more warlike, and like other Chaco tribes, they were even in the habit of scalping those enemies whom they killed during their raids.

The *Mataco*, although anthropologically closely related to the Choroti, differ from them considerably in character. The Mataco Indian is serious, taciturn, and gloomy, and in consequence more addicted to religion and superstition than his brother the Choroti Indian. At least nowadays, when the Indians are strongly influenced by European civilization, the Mataco Indian will not make a reliable servant and companion. Cleanliness is not a particular characteristic of the Choroti, but the Mataco are probably the dirtiest of all Chaco tribes. This too may in part be a consequence of their contact with the whites. On the other hand, the Mataco are more industrious and energetic than the Choroti, and accordingly, in their wars, have proved more valiant and capable of more organization than their primitive neighbours. In these respects the Mataco, at any rate the Bolivian tribes, resemble their neighbours the Tobas more than the Choroti.

As to the *Tobas*, their moral qualities and disposition have been described with much unanimity by many travellers. Nearly all have characterized them as bad, ferocious, treacherous, thievish, etc., qualities which they have especially displayed towards the whites. Typical on